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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/E, AF/RSA, AF/EPS, EEB/TPA/MTA/MST AND DRL/IL
DEPT ALSO PASS TO USTR FOR JESSICA STEINBERG AND BILL JACKSON
DEPT ALSO PASS TO DEPT OF LABOR FOR SUDHA HALEY, PATRICK WHITE AND
MAUREEN PETTIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ELAB](#) [ETRD](#) [AGOA](#) [ECON](#) [PHUM](#) [KE](#)
SUBJECT:GSP QUERY; NO CHILD LABOR IN KENYAN CARPET INDUSTRY

REF: USTR E-MAIL OF 3/28/08

1. Please see below response to ref e-mail concerning the Kenya Child Labor Review of certain handmade carpets eligible for benefits under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). The purpose of the Child Labor Review is to identify information about the use of the worst forms of child labor in each of the 21 countries, among them Kenya, from which the U.S. has imported these carpets under GSP and whether each country is taking steps to eliminate such worst forms of child labor in the production of these types of carpets.

Nature of the Handmade Carpet Industry

2. The Kenyan handmade carpet industry is made up of hundreds of handloom weavers, mostly families with one or two employees. Some have workshops, while others work at home. Some subcontract weaving/spinning to women's groups in the slums. There is also a large group of weavers who are disabled. There is no evidence these weavers export their products. It is likely the \$3,825 of carpets imported from Kenya in 2005 were not actually produced in Kenya. There are no statistics on the carpet sector, but it appears to be in decline. Kenya Weaver Bird used to employ about 300 people, but has cut down to 15 employees.

Use of Child Labor in Carpet Production

3. LabAtt has followed child labor issues carefully for the last 32 months, and has never encountered an allegation of child labor in the carpet and rug sector. No one in the NGO Network for Child Labor and Trafficking was aware of any such problem. Gloria Ndekei, National Program Coordinator, ILO-Women Entrepreneurship Development and Gender Equality Program said ILO has not witnessed any child labor among the handloom weavers association members with whom they have worked for 10 years. Kenya Weaver Bird, which participated in the USAID-supported Export Promotion Council exports to East African Community countries, stated that all its employees are adults. ANPPCAN Child Labor Program Manager Samuel Munyuwiny said there has been no child labor in the carpet sector.

Measures to Eliminate Child Labor in Carpet Industry

4. Kenya has no special program to address child labor in the carpet sector, but has outlawed child labor and is in the final stages of developing its national strategy and action plan. The USDoL-funded ILO/IPEC program to fight child labor has worked with unions and employers to eliminate child labor in agriculture and other sectors, but there was no need to address the carpet sector.

RANNEBERGER